

Thomas K. Small House
Highland Road and Old King's Highway
Truro
Barnstable County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-767

HABS
MASS,
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

THOMAS K. SMALL HOUSE

HABS No. MA-767

Located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Highland Road and Old King's Highway in "The Highlands," in North Truro, Barnstable County, Massachusetts.

Building number 15-1 in Cape Cod National Seashore.

Owners: Miss Elizabeth B. Clarkson and Miss Claire Flanagan, both of 76 Remsen Street, Brooklyn 1, New York.

Use: Summer residence, partly for rental.

Date of erection: ca. 1820/30.

This is an example of a traditional Cape Cod "house-and-a-half" with overhanging gables. It was owned by a prosperous farmer of the mid-nineteenth century. It is classified as a historic structure in the Cape Cod National Seashore.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

No documents pertaining to the construction of this house are known to exist; therefore, the date of construction cannot be fixed exactly. However, by visual examination and comparison with other houses of established date, this house can be assigned with some certainty to the decade 1820/30. The low exterior walls, with the window frames directly under the plate, represent a form of construction which persisted on the Lower Cape until about 1830, which is thus the latest reasonable date of erection. The roof structure consists of straight-sawn rafters with the planking nailed parallel to the ridge; a kind of construction which appeared on the Lower Cape about 1820, which is thus the earliest reasonable date of erection. The interior has been stripped of mantels and other woodwork which would give additional clues.

The original owner of the house has not been discovered. The earliest known owner was Thomas Kenney Small (1821-1894), son of Colonel Joshua Small (who owned and occupied the Isaac Small house, which was then the next adjoining property to the south. The Isaac Small House is building number 16-2 in Cape Cod National Seashore and is also in HABS). Thomas Kenney Small probably purchased the house about the time of his marriage, in 1853. The house is indicated by the name T. K. Small on the "Map of the Counties of Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket, Massachusetts," published by Henry F. Walling, New York, 1858. The house is also indicated T. K. Small on folio 77 of the Atlas of Barnstable County, Massachusetts, published in Boston, 1880.

Thomas K. Small was a farmer, and the part of Truro where he lived, known as "The Highlands," was considered one of the richest farming districts on Lower Cape Cod. After the death of Thomas K. Small, in 1894, the house was occupied by his widow, Jerusha Maria Small, who lived until 1921. Her son Edward Larkin Small ran the farm for his mother and lived in the house until some date after 1925. The house was eventually inherited by Tilley Small, daughter of Thomas K. Small. She left the house to her kinsman, John Small of Provincetown, who sold it to George Hemond. In 1961, shortly before his death, George Hemond sold the house to Miss Elizabeth B. Clarkson and Miss Claire Flanagan, who own it jointly.

The preceding account was derived from interviews with Professor Leroy James Cook, who owns the Isaac Small House and is a descendant of the Small family; from the genealogical charts in possession of Professor Cook; from an interview with Miss Elizabeth Clarkson; and from an interview with Mrs. Ruth Dyer of Truro. Further facts about Thomas K. Small and his wife were found in the Vital Records of Truro, Massachusetts (Boston, 1933), pp. 225, 226, 235, and on their gravestones in the North Truro Cemetery.

Further information might be obtained from Mrs. George Hemond, who lives next door to the Thomas K. Small House, and from Mr. John Hall of Provincetown. A detailed search of the Barnstable County deed records might reveal the original owner.

Miss Elizabeth Clarkson has a photograph of the house taken from the northwest ca. 1900.

The principal addition to the house is an ell, on the north, which was doubtless built as a summer kitchen, after the usual fashion. The ell may have been built by Thomas K. Small and could be dated as late as the 1850's. The only specific evidence for this date is one 2-panel Greek Revival door remaining in situ. Otherwise the ell has been completely remodelled (before 1961) with knotty pine panelling, large windows, and modern kitchen equipment. A porch was also added on the west side of the ell by George Hemond. In 1962 Misses Clarkson and Flanagan added a dormer to the west side of the ell roof. In the original part of the house the old kitchen fireplace and mantel have been rebuilt modern. The fireplaces and mantels in the front rooms have been completely removed. The window sashes have been replaced. A modern bathroom fills the former small bedroom off the original kitchen. The garret has been remodelled as a small apartment for rental.

Prepared by:

Ernest Allen Connally
Ernest Allen Connally
National Park Service
Cape Cod Survey II
Truro field office
August, 1962

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PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The Thomas K. Small House is a one and a half story Cape Cod "house-and-a-half" of wood construction and covered with wood shingles. The rectangular house faces south and has a modernized north ell. This well maintained house is surrounded by residential lawn and planting.

The main structure's over-all dimensions are 25'-10" on the south by 27'-7" on the west. The walls are plank construction covered by wood shingles (on the outside and plastered on the inside). The frame is post and beam. There is a modern enclosed porch to the west of the north ell, all exterior doors have red brick stoops. The one red brick chimney is at the center of the main house and at the ridge.

The front door is on the south side and has six panels. The north ell has one modern door, one two vertical panel Greek Revival door and one late nineteenth century door with etched glass. Windows have 12/12 light double hung sash. The top of the sash is right under the exterior box cornice. Only the south side of the house has exterior, wooden blinds. The gable roof is covered with wooden shingles and the roof planks run parallel to the ridge, and are supported by rafters with small 3/4 round reeded edges. There is a simple boxed cornice. The roof has an overhanging gable end and there is one dormer in the north ell.

The first floor has a center chimney, two main front rooms, a large north room and an ell. The first floor has a main south front entry hall and stair, which are flanked on either side by primary rooms. The one to the southeast, however, is quite small. To the north of the main house is the largest room, the old kitchen, now a living room. To the west of this living room are two small rooms,

one of them a modern bath. The north ell contains one large modern kitchen. The second floor has a modern apartment consisting of four rooms and a bath. There is a brick circular Cape Cod cellar under the main house and a modern basement under the north ell.

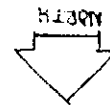
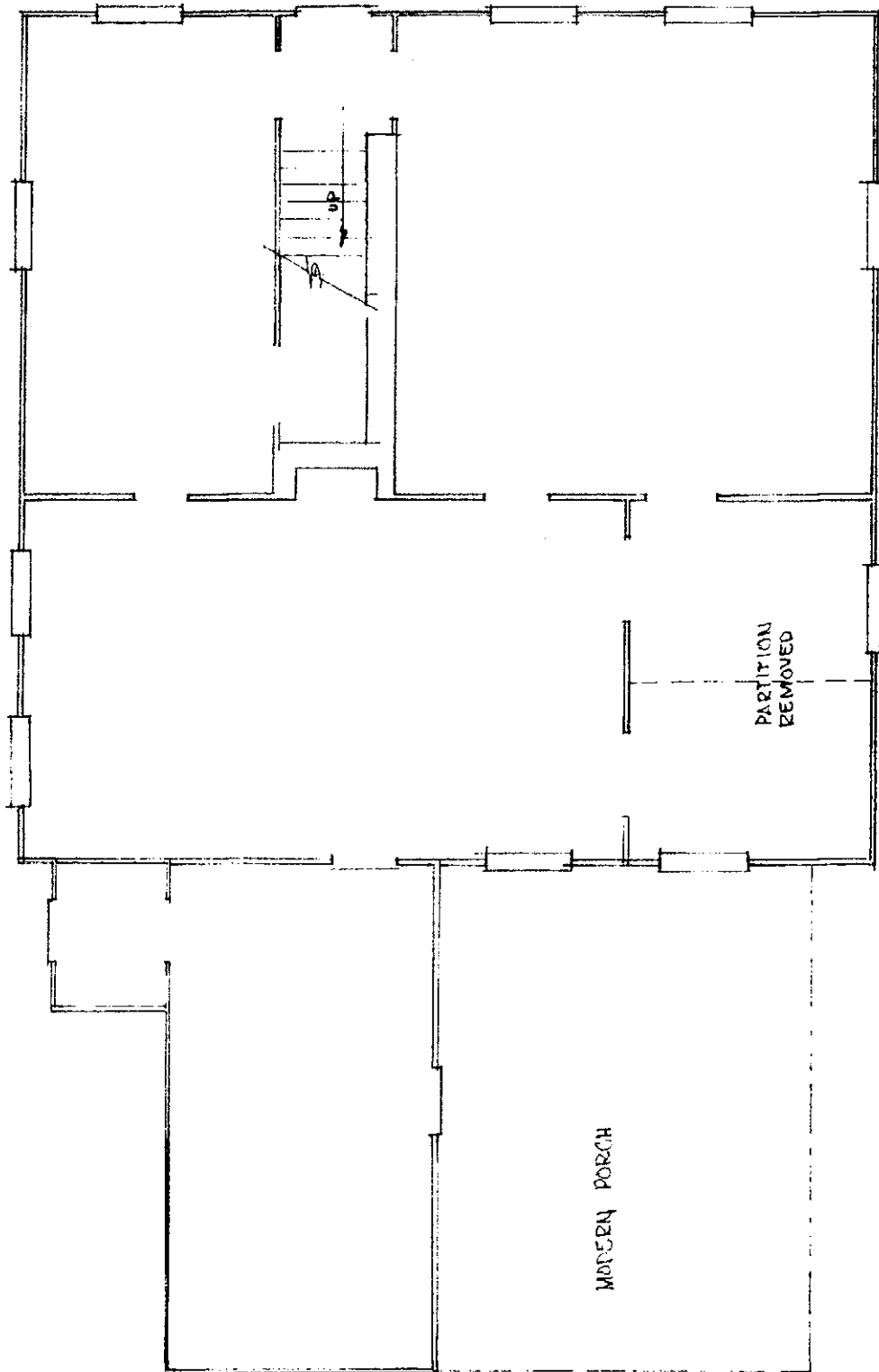
The one stair runs in the center of the house from the south door to the center chimney on the second floor. The flooring is random width planking from 8" to 14". The flooring in the southeast room has been altered and at present runs in two directions. There is just enough surface evidence to hint at a side entrance (east side) and a stair running from east to west in the area that is now the southeast room, which would have been common in the Cape Cod house and a half.

The walls and ceiling are plaster, except in the north ell where there is knotty pine. The old kitchen of the main house has wainscoting with 20" boards. The fireplace walls are not original. All trim is painted wood and seems to match the original. All interior doors are six panel painted wood. The hardware is iron with lift latches on the doors. Light is from modern electric lamps and heat is central. There is a rebuilt fireplace in the old kitchen.

The house is in sight of the Highland Lighthouse. There is a small modern fence to the west of the house, which encloses a modern patio.

Prepared by:

Donald B. Myer
Donald B. Myer
National Park Service
Cape Cod Survey II
Truro field office
July 26, 1962



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
NO SCALE